

Amendments to the Drawings

Applicants have submitted 7 sheets of formal replacement drawings representing FIGS. 1-7 in compliance with 37 C.F. R. 1.121(d). The drawings are labeled "Replacement Sheets" and replace the first 7 informal drawings of the originally filed 8 sheets. FIG. 8 has not been changed. No new matter has been added.

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-12 are pending in the present application. Claims 2 and 13 have been cancelled without prejudice. The claims have been amended for clarity, to correct antecedent basis and to remove the reference numerals.

The specification has been amended to remove reference to the claims in the specification. The specification has also been amended to include headings.

Formal drawings have been provided for FIGS. 1-7 that were originally filed as informal drawings.

No new matter has been added with these changes.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. Drawing Objections

The drawings have been objected to for failing to illustrate proper cross hatch.

Applicants have provided 7 replacement sheets of formal drawings to replace the originally filed informal drawings of FIGS. 1-7 in compliance with 37 C.F. R. §1.121(d). FIG. 8 has not been changed. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

II. Specification Objections

The specification has been objected to for incorporation by reference.

Applicants respectfully believe that the Examiner is referring to the references to the claims within the specification.

Applicants have amended the specification to remove the reference to the claims and have replaced the claim references with the text of the claims.

Applicants have also amended the specification to include headings as required by MPEP § 608.01 (a). No new matter has been added with these amendments.

Applicants respectfully request that the objections to the specification be withdrawn.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to clarify the relationship between the first unit and the second unit.

Applicants have amended claims 4 and 6 to provide antecedent basis.

Applicants have cancelled claim 13 rendering the rejections of claim 13 moot.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. §112 be withdrawn.

IV. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by McDonald (U.S. 2,195,492). Claims 2 and 13 have been cancelled, rendering the rejection of claims 2 and 13 moot.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1 and 3-12 as being anticipated by McDonald.

McDonald is directed to a coupling having a body A, a tail piece B, and a sleeve C. A gasket 6 is placed on the face of the flange 3. (Col. 1, lines 51-52.) The coupling sleeve handle C is rotatably mounted on the body A. (Col. 1, lines 54-55.) The flange 12 carried by the tail piece B has cam edges 12a so inclined that as the handle C is rotated with respect to the member B, the projections or lugs 14 will ride upon the cam edges 12a and will frictionally bind the tail piece B to the body A. (Col. 2, lines 25-31.) As shown in FIG. 1, the gasket 6 forms a seal between the body A and the tail piece B. The lock that holds the two pieces A and B together is formed by lugs 14 on the sleeve C that join with cam edges 12a on piece B. In other words, a seal is formed between A and B at the gasket 6 and that seal at the gasket 6 does not provide a lock at the seal. Clearly, McDonald fails to teach or suggest first and second sealing elements configured for being mutually locking engagable. In addition, McDonald fails to teach or suggest that the separator elements are arranged at an axial distance from the lock. The face of the ring C and the cam face 12a of the piece B that are in abutment against each other also form the lock as described above. In other words, the portions of the ring C and the piece B that form faces in abutment also form the lock at the same axial location and thus, are not axially spaced apart.

In contrast, Applicants' claim 1 requires first and second sealing elements configured for being mutually lockingly engagable. In addition, claim 1 further requires separator elements having a face on the female part and a face on the male part in abutment and that the separator elements are arranged at an axial distance

from the lock. Clearly, McDonald fails to teach each and every claimed element of claim 1 as required by 35 U.S.C. § 102.


Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1 and 3-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) be withdrawn.

V. Summary

It is respectfully asserted that the claims properly define the invention and that the invention is both novel and non-obvious. Allowance of the present claims is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the above submissions in more detail, the Examiner is asked to please call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Heidi A. Dare
Registration No. 50,775
Attorney for Applicants

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. BOX 10395
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610
(312) 321-4200